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RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 7328
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RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
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"THE QUICKER N. KOREA RETURNS TO THE SIX-PARTY TALKS, THE BETTER"

Left-leaning Hankyoreh Shinmun editorialized (02/08): "The willingness of countries involved in the Six-Party Talks to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue through negotiations is stronger than ever. This is a good opportunity for North Korea to ease its security concerns and reestablish its relations with the international community. The North is undergoing an unprecedented economic crisis following international sanctions and its botched currency reform. In this situation, if tensions about its nuclear program continue to escalate, not only North Korean citizens but also the Pyongyang regime itself will face greater difficulties. The quicker the North returns to the Six-Party Talks, the better."

STEPHENS